[Mr. Speaker] [23rd August 1960

Question No. 479 on 2nd June 1960. The answer to the second question came earlier and the question was included in the questions list. The answer to the first question was received later. This gave rise to most of the misunderstanding and difference. Apart from that even on the merits of the case, I am afraid the hon. Member has no point which will amount to a breach of privilege. The allegation that a misleading statement or an incorrect statement has been made or the Hon. Minister has not answered a question correctly cannot constitute a breach of privilege. On merits, the matter raised by the hon. Member does not involve a breach of privilege. I, therefore, rule it out of order.

III CALLING ATTENTION TO LOW STORAGE POSITION IN METTUR RESERVOIR.

MR. SPEAKER : I have received notice under Rule 41 from the hon. Member Sri R. Srinivasa Iyer who will now speak.

* SRI R. SRINIVASA IYER : Sir, I desire to call the attention of the Hon. the Minister for Works to a matter of urgent public importance, viz., the low storage position in Mettur Reservoir, inadequate supply of water for irrigation from the Mettur Reservoir and the proposed introduction of turn system in the Cauvery delta far in advance of, the usual date and the consequent panic and anixety prevalent among ryots in Thanjavur district.

Sir, the storage position in Mettur Reservoir this year since 15th June, when it was opened for irrigation, has been causing the greatest anxiety to Government, the P.W.D., authorities and the ryots in Thanjavur district. On 30th July, the level of water in Mettur was only 63·1′ and and on the 3rd July, it was only 50′. Therefore on 30th July, Government contemplated introduction of turn-system even from 15th August. Fortunately there was a little more rain. Even to-day, till yesterday evening, the situation has not improved much and the level of water is low—101′. Last year we had normal rains and the reservoir was full (120′). This year the reservoir is not full. The inflow is very low being 18,000 cusecs only and it is below normal. Perhaps the introduction of turn-system may be postponed by a few days but it is inevitable far in advance of the usual date. The inflow into Mettur Reservoir has gone down very much. Last year by this time Mettur was surplusing (top level 120 feet). Even from now onwards we require nearly two lakh million cubic feet of water for the remaining part of the irrigation season. We have only about one-third of that quantity in storage. The storage position on the 17th morning was still less. How long will this last? Assume for a moment the North East Monsoon fails, what will be our position? It is for this reason and at this juncture we have to look back and find out the reason for the low storage this year. We are not far below the average rainfall at Mercara.

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Krishnarajasagar is surplussing since 1st August, while the level in Mettur was only 65 feet as against the full level of 120 feet. What is the reason? There are six scheduled rivers, viz., Cauvery and its tributaries. No reservoirs could be constructed by Mysore State across any of these after 1924 without the previous consent and knowledge of the Madras State. Shimsa and Lokapavani are two other tributaries of the Cauvery which are not scheduled. Even if with the knowledge of Madras State any reservoirs are constructed the aggregate capacity of these reservoirs cannot exceed 45,500 million cubic feet which is less than half the capacity of Mettur Reservoir. The capacity of Krishnaraja Sagar was to be only 45,000 million cubic feet.

Madras has a first charge on Cauvery waters for the entire area under irrigation before 1924 and entitled to construct the Mettur Dam with a storage capacity of 93,500 million cubic feet and extend irrigation to 301,00 acres.

In May 1959, when I went to Mysore I found from exhibits of Mysore Government in an Ehxibition that of the six scheduled rivers' reservoirs had been constructed across four and the other two would be commenced shortly thereafter? Sir, the public are entitled to know if Mysore has given data about these reservoirs to Madras, whether we have verified if the agreement of 1924 and 1892 have not been transgressed or how far transgressed. I am of opinion that this year Mysore State has diverted more water than they are entitled to and have also obstructed the free flow of water by constructing reservoirs across the tributaries of the Cauvery. This has to be verified. In 1952 they had diverted more waters than they were entitled to and they raised three crops for a full year. Therefore, Sir, we are entitled to have suffient information on this and this position should be seriously considered not only for the present but for future also.

Sir, Mysore is bound to give data every year about their irrigation, storage, etc. I learn they have not been doing so all these years. The officers of the Madras P.W.D., were not given facilities to note down first-hand the quantity of water stored in Krishnaraja Sagar and the quantity let down to us. Of course, on paper everything is manipulated. We have to accept the words of Mysore Officers. Madras P.W.D., have not so far gone up the streams and verified at first-hand how far the agreement has been respected. I was told our P.W.D., staff are not allowed to go up the streams and are even threatened. Reports about such things must be available with us. As to rain, we are not far short of the normal average as can be seen from meteorological reports. Yet when we are not far below normal, the situation in Mettur is precarious, causes great anxiety and needs investigation and remedy. If Mysore has constructed reservoirs and intends constructing more, we must take immediate steps to enforce our agreement. Else it will be impossible to remedy matters later and a *fait accompli*, may not be overcome.

I request the Government that they should depute a Committee of P.W.D., Engineers including retired Chief Engineers or Executive Engineers, who had personal experience of Cauvery irrigation to inspect the entire length of all the rivers, Cauvery and its tributaries in Mysore State and find out what has happened. If necesary permission of the Central Government may be obtained and our Engineers may go with sufficient protection.

The situation is creating panic in the minds of Tanjore ryots and it is proper that they should know the real situation and what the Government propose to do.

For the present we require more inflow into the Mettur Reservoir and the turn system should not be introduced till the kuruvai harvest. The kuruvai crops require sufficient and copious supply of water till harvest. Therefore I appeal to the Government not to introduce the turn system even from 1st September as contemplated. I understand that the Chief Engineer has called for a conference of the Engineers under the Cauvery system on 25th August 1960 for this purpose.

THE HON. SRI P. KAKKAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has called attention to the following: the low level of water in Mettur Reservoir, the precarious inflow of water into it this year in spite of the rain in the catchment area of the Cauvery between 1st June and 1st August 1960 being only about $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches less than what it was during the corresponding period in 1959 according to meteorological reports, the reasons for such a position, inadequate supply of water for irrigation, the proposed introduction of turn system in Cauvery Delta even from 15th August and the consequent panic and anxiety prevalent among ryots in Thanjavur district.

The flows in the Cauvery are influenced mostly by the rainfall near Mercara in Coorg. The actual run-off from the catchment of a river is dependent not merely on the *total* quantity of rainfall but also, to a considerable extent, on the intensity and distribution of rainfall in that period.

As per reports of Meteorological department, the total rainfall recorded at Mercara this year between 1st June and 1st August is only 61·73 inches as against 110·30 inches recorded last year (1959) for the same period and this year's *deficit* with reference to last year's rainfall is, therefore, found to be 48·57 inches and not 4·5 inches as furnished by the Madras Legislative Assembly. Not only the total rainfall this year has, so far been short of last year's by about 45 per cent, but the intensity and distribution of the rainfall has also been disadvantageous, so far as the flows into the Cauvery river are concerned. Hence the low realisation at Mettur Dam is due to natural phenomena like the vagaries of monsoon.

The hon. Member has mentioned about inadequate supply of water for irrigation and the proposed introduction of turn system in the Cauvery Delta. No inadequacy of supplies has so

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far been felt anywhere in the delta and the crops are all given their normal requirements in spite of low storage in Mettur Reservoir. The issues from the reservoir have been steadily raised from 10,000 cusecs on the opening of the reservoir to above 30,000 cusecs on 12th August 1960. In view of the low supply conditions in the Mettur Reservoir, it was the duty of the Government to forewarn the ryots with regard to any possible cut in supplies that might have to be enforced and this prior warning was also necessary so that the ryots would be fully prepared. With that idea only, a Press Communique was issued on 30th July 1960 that turn system might have to be enforced from 15th August if conditions of inflow and storage in Mettur did not improve and it was also stated then that the position would be periodically reviewed. The storage on 30th July 1960 was only 63·1 feet; on 5th August 1960 it was 81·9 feet and on 12th August 1960 it was 101·45 feet. As the storage position is now found to be improved, the turn system originally thought of is not to be enforced though the possibility of introducing the turn system at a later date with a view to make the best use of available waters, if the storage falls down considerably, may not be ruled out. There is no need for the ryots to get panicky as the conditions now are better than on 30th July 1960 when the situation was last reviewed.

IV.—GOVERNMENT MOTIONS.

(1) Association of Legislative Council Members with the Committee on Public Accounts.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : Sir, I move—

'That this House recommends to the Legislative Council that they do nominate five Members of the Council to associate with the Committee on Public Accounts of this House for the year 1960–61 and communicate to this House the names of the Members so nominated.'

MR. SPEAKER : The question is—

'That this House recommends to the Legislative Council that they do nominate five Members of the Council to associate with the Committee on Public Accounts of this House for the year 1960–61 and communicate to this House the names of the Members so nominated.'

The motion was put and carried.

(2) Election to the Board of Industries.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Sir, I move—

'That in order to represent the Madras Legislative Assembly on the Board of Industries, this Assembly, in accordance with section 3 (1) (*b*) of the Madras State Aid to Industries Act, 1922 (Madras Act V of 1923) and rule XXII (2) of the Madras Small Scale and Cottage Industries Loans and Susbidy Rules, 1956, do proceed on a date to be fixed by the Speaker to elect two representatives on the Board of Industries constituted under the Act.'